

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to remember an extraordinary young woman, a scholar, a student activist, Ms. Tam Ngoc Tran of Garden Grove, California, who was recently killed in a head-on collision with her close friend, Cinthya Perez.

Tam was the daughter of a refugee couple who fled Vietnam over two decades ago after escaping from a communist reeducation camp.

She graduated from Santiago High School, attended Santa Ana College, transferred to UCLA, earned a bachelor's degree in American literature and culture and was a doctoral student at Brown University.

Tam was also a courageous leader who inspired many through her personal story of immigration. In 2007, the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agency raided the Tran home and subsequently arrested Tam and many of her family members.

Representatives Lofgren, Smith, and I then wrote a letter to then-Secretary Rice urging her to uphold the U.S. policy regarding the return of refugees to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. That allowed them to remain in the United States.